REMARKS

Appreciation is expressed for the interview kindly accorded Stephen A. Terrile, applicants' attorney, on March 10, 2004. During the interview, proposed amended claims substantially as presented in this Amendment were presented and the cited art was discussed. It was agreed that an Amendment to incorporate the proposed amended claims would be filed to distinguish over the prior art of record. It was also agreed that further consideration would be required upon the filing of the Amendment.

Claims 1 – 25 are pending in the application. Claims 1 – 25 have been rejected. Claims 1, 3, 7, 9, 13, 19 and 20 have been amended. Claim 2 has been cancelled. No new claims have been added.

Claims 1, 5 and 6 stand rejected under Hennig et al, U.S. Patent No. 6,587,827 (Hennig). Claims 2, 3, 7-9, 11-15, 17-20 and 22-25 stand rejected under Hennig, in view of Lemchen et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,594,642 B1 (Lemchen). Claims 4, 10, 16 and 21 stand rejected under Hennig, in view of Lemchen and further in view of Peterson et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,539,360 B1 (Peterson).

The present invention, as set forth by independent claim 1, relates to a method of ordering material. The method includes considering a quantity of a material available from a plurality of suppliers via a computer system, considering a quantity of a material available from a plurality of supplier logistics centers via a computer system, identifying a supplier or a supplier logistics center to receive an order for the material based upon the considering, and sending electronically an order for the particular material to the supplier or supplier logistics center identified to receive the order. The material is not ordered until a manufacturer realizes a demand. The manufacturer realizes the demand for the material after orders are received from customers. Fulfilling the orders requires assembling the products and assembling the products requires the material.

The present invention, as set forth by independent claim 7, relates to a method of assembling a computer system. The method includes considering a quantity of a material available from a plurality of suppliers via a computer system, considering a quantity of a material

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available from a plurality of supplier logistics centers via a computer system, identifying a supplier or a supplier logistics center to receive an order for the material, ordering the material from the supplier or supplier logistics center identified to receive the order, and assembling the computer system at an assembly facility from the material received at the assembly facility.

The present invention, as set forth by independent claim 13, relates to a method of manufacturing a computer system. The method includes considering a quantity of material available from a plurality of suppliers via a computer system, considering a quantity of a material available from a plurality of supplier logistics centers via a computer system, identifying a supplier to receive an order for the material based upon the considering, sending electronically an order for material to the supplier or supplier logistics center identified to receive the order, and manufacturing the computer system at a manufacturing facility using the material received at the manufacturing facility.

The present invention, as set forth by independent claim 19, relates to a computer system, wherein the computer system is assembled by a method. The method includes considering a quantity of material available from a plurality of suppliers, considering a quantity of a material available from a plurality of supplier logistics centers, identifying a supplier or a supplier logistics center to receive an order for the material based upon the considering, sending electronically an order for the material to the supplier or supplier logistics center identified to receive the order, and assembling the computer at an assembly facility.

Hennig discloses processing a customer generated order for a product in which client computers are connected through a server to a plurality of supplier computers to fulfill a customer generated order. More specifically, Hennig is directed to automatically processing customer generated orders without any human intervention for multiple products. The client creates an order event with a preferred supplier for the customer generated order and routes the order event to the preferred supplier. Additionally, the server frequently monitors the status of the order event from the preferred supplier as the supplier processes the order event. The server periodically synchronizes the inventory between the client and all suppliers.

When discussing the manner in which a client creates an order event with a preferred supplier, Hennig sets forth:

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For each customer order received, the client 10 determines a preferred supplier 14 for the product ordered (block 40). In the preferred embodiment, a preferred supplier 14 is determined to be a supplier with available inventory of the product and preferably located in the same geographical areas as the shipping destination specified by the customer order, (which should minimize the time and/or cost of shipping) but other considerations may be used to determine preferred status. For example, transportation efficiencies may dictate the choice of a particular supplier as a preferred supplier even thought that supplier is geographically farther away from the shipping destination than another supplier. (Hennig, Co. 5, lines 51 – 63.)

When discussing the synchronization, Hennig sets forth:

In accordance with another important aspect of the present invention, the server synchronizes the inventory between the client and all suppliers as shown in Fig. 7. This subroutine is triggered by an expired timeout (block 106), and the timeout is set at the end of the subroutine to restart again. The server 12 first retrieves the most updated inventory level from all suppliers, including the preferred supplier 14 by making a connection to all suppliers 14 (block 110). The client 10 updates the current inventory for all suppliers, including the preferred suppliers, in its own database (block 112), in which the information is later used for picking a preferred supplier for a given order event. The server ends the subroutine by starting the timeout (block 114). (Hennig, Col. 7, lines 16 – 31.)

Accordingly, Hennig is directed to processing customer orders and fulfilling the customer orders via suppliers. Henning does not teach or suggest ordering material for use in manufacturing products.

Lemchen discloses a system for ordering and manufacturing personalized products over the Internet. A robotic manufacturing machine offers options on multiple physical features of a product. These options are presented to consumers via the Internet. A consumer selects the options using a computer. The selected options are received by a web server and converted to machine instructions. The machine instructions are transmitted to the robotic machine which produces a product according to the instructions received. The end result is a personalized product manufactured specifically to the consumer's selections as a result of a completely automated process.

Peterson discloses a process for distributing items, especially industrial maintenance repair and operating (MRO) parts and supplies. The process includes identifying a plurality of vendors selling an item. An information network is established by which each vendor can communicate to the other vendors a current inventory quantity and a current price of the item

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each of the vendors has for sale. An agreement is established among the vendors in which a first vendor agrees to sell to a second vendor, upon demand at a future point in time, up to the then current inventory quantity of the item at the then current price communicated over the information network by the first vendor to the second vendor

Hennig, Lemchen and Peterson, taken alone or in combination do not teach or suggest a method of ordering material wherein the method includes considering a quantity of a material available from a plurality of suppliers via a computer system, considering a quantity of a material available from a plurality of supplier logistics centers via a computer system, identifying a supplier or a supplier logistics center to receive an order for the material based upon the considering, and sending electronically an order for the particular material to the supplier or supplier logistics center identified to receive the order and wherein the material is not ordered until a manufacturer realizes a demand wherein the manufacturer realizes the demand for the material after orders are received from customers wherein fulfilling the orders requires assembling the products and assembling the products requires the material, all as required by amended independent claim 1. Accordingly, claim 1 is allowable over Hennig, Lemchen and Peterson. Claims 3 – 6 depend from claim 1 and are allowable for at least this reason.

Hennig, Lemchen and Peterson, taken alone or in combination do not teach or suggest a method of assembling a computer system wherein the method includes considering a quantity of a material available from a plurality of suppliers via a computer system, considering a quantity of a material available from a plurality of supplier logistics centers via a computer system, identifying a supplier or a supplier logistics center to receive an order for the material, ordering the material from the supplier or supplier logistics center identified to receive the order, and assembling the computer system at an assembly facility from the material received at the assembly facility, all as required by independent claim 7. Accordingly, claim 7 is allowable over Hennig, Lemchen, and Peterson. Claims 8 – 12 depend from claim 7 and are allowable for at least this reason.
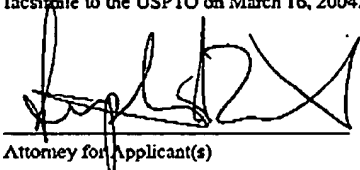
Hennig, Lemchen and Peterson, taken alone or in combination do not teach or suggest a a method of manufacturing a computer system. The method includes considering a quantity of material available from a plurality of suppliers via a computer system, considering a quantity of a

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material available from a plurality of supplier logistics centers via a computer system, identifying a supplier to receive an order for the material based upon the considering, sending electronically an order for material to the supplier or supplier logistics center identified to receive the order, and manufacturing the computer system at a manufacturing facility using the material received at the manufacturing facility, all as required by independent claim 13. Accordingly, claim 13 is allowable over Hennig, Lemchen and Peterson. Claims 14 – 18 depend from claim 13 and are allowable for at least this reason.
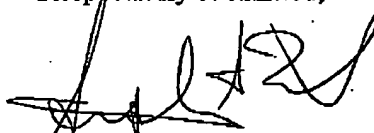
Hennig, Lemchen and Peterson, taken alone or in combination do not teach or suggest a computer system, wherein the computer system is assembled by a method wherein the method includes considering a quantity of material available from a plurality of suppliers, considering a quantity of a material available from a plurality of supplier logistics centers, identifying a supplier or a supplier logistics center to receive an order for the material based upon the considering, sending electronically an order for the material to the supplier or supplier logistics center identified to receive the order, and assembling the computer at an assembly facility, all as required by independent claim 19. Accordingly, claim 19 is allowable over Hennig, Lemchen and Peterson. Claims 20 – 25 depend from claim 19 and are allowable for at least this reason.

CONCLUSION

The claims have been amended to improve clarity. In view of the amendments and remarks set forth herein, the application is believed to be in condition for allowance and a notice to that effect is solicited. Nonetheless, should any issues remain that might be subject to resolution through a telephonic interview, the examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being transmitted via facsimile to the USPTO on March 16, 2004.

3/16/04

Attorney for Applicant(s)   Date of Signature

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